

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Stripp Warns of New Centralized Planning Threat to Home Rule, Property Values



Connecticut's municipalities will lose further control over their own destinies and property values may decline because of a measure approved recently by the General Assembly, state Representative John E. Stripp said today.

The measure (House Joint Resolution 146) authorizes policies that begin the usurpation of the prerogatives of municipal land use boards to establish and enforce local planning and zoning regulations, said Representative Stripp, R-135th District.

The adopted "State Plan of Conservation and Development" endorses incentives that "reward compliance with regional approaches" to the development of our towns – at the expense of local control over land use decisions that impact property owners, Representative Stripp said.

"What these policies envisage is the imposition of a system of centralized command and control by the state on Connecticut's municipalities," Representative Stripp said. "They would transfer control over land use decisions that have traditionally been the responsibility of local elected officials and planning and zoning commissions to a group of bureaucrats in Hartford who are determined to eliminate the last vestiges of home rule and local autonomy. Local initiatives such as accessory apartments would be put aside in favor of regional master plans."

"While these policies have been carefully written to appear as benign and non-threatening as possible, if you read between the lines and understand how they will affect our towns, it becomes apparent that their real intent is to make it as difficult as possible for people to move to communities with quality schools," Representative Stripp said. "Failing that, these policies would make it even easier than it is now for developers to take advantage of Connecticut's affordable housing law to bypass local zoning regulations and build high-density housing complexes in areas that do not have the infrastructure to support such development."

"Communities across Connecticut already have been severely impacted by developers who have taken advantage of the affordable housing law to erect high density apartment complexes in their neighborhoods. In Trumbull, where several so-called 'affordable

housing' projects were built, local schools were swamped because of the influx of hundreds of children whose families had moved into the new complexes. Unfortunately for local taxpayers, the new housing units did not generate enough new revenues to cover the costs of educating those children and property taxes went up significantly," Representative Stripp said.

"Ironically, while China is phasing out central planning directives that have been a drag on that country's economy for 50 years, Connecticut is in the process of implementing similar social engineering schemes," Representative Stripp said. "If these policies are allowed to stand, we will continue to lose population to the low-tax states in the south and southwest. They are growing and prospering while Connecticut and other states in the northeast are stagnating. Now is not the time to move to centralized control of our state's future."